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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002483

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG AND AF/SE  
NSC FOR COURVILLE AND SHORTLEY

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TAGS: PGOV PREL AU SU

SUBJECT: DARFUR: ARAB FACTIONALIZATION, INCREASING  
INSECURITY, LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF DPA

Classified By: CDA C. Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d).

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (C) In meetings September 21-24, UN officers, Sudanese Liberation Movement (SLM) Minni Minawi representatives, and Government of National Unity (GNU) officials in West Darfur all highlighted continued insecurity, a lack of humanitarian access and an absence of information about the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) throughout the state. National Intelligence and Security Service's (NISS) tight grip and the paucity of civil society groups in West Darfur remain impediments to DPA outreach. However, there is private interest among community leaders in learning more about the accord. End summary.

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ARAB DISCONTENT AND FACTIONAL MILITIAS  
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¶2. (C) Active Response Corps (ARC) Officer met with UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) officials in El Geneina, capital of West Darfur state, to discuss security developments and their impact on political and humanitarian activities. UNDSS noted that, unlike North and South Darfur, Government forces controls &more than ninety percent8 of West Darfur, with the exception of small pockets of rebel-controlled territory in Jebel Moon and west of Masteri. The principal actors undermining stability in West Darfur are Arab militia and Chadian opposition groups. UNDSS related that in early 2006 conversations with Musa Hilal, the Janjaweed leader conveyed his frustration with the Government for having &sold out8 Arab tribes. Hilal argued that Arabs were given no land or compensation for their losses incurred during the fighting in Darfur. Furthermore, the Government made no provision to officially reintegrate Arab tribes into the security services while, at the same time, committing to disarm the Janjaweed. According to UNDSS, Hilal was incensed that there was no Arab representation at the Abuja negotiations, which further exacerbated his frustration with the government.

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INCREASING INSECURITY  
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¶3. (C) UNDSS estimated that Hilal's influence over Arab tribes in the region had diminished since the signing of the DPA. The emerging security picture is one of greater Arab factionalization, especially among youth, who are increasingly engaged in banditry, carjackings, and targeting of NGOs. UNDSS described the environment as a major security

challenge, given the lack of cohesion among Arab groups and the proliferation of self-professed militia & leaders.<sup>8</sup> Despite Government claims of security primacy in West Darfur, UNDSS noted that nearly all roads in the state are classified as &no go8 for the humanitarian community because of the likelihood of banditry or other hostile activity; many of these roads are also off-limits for the Sudanese police and armed forces. Additionally, UNDSS observed that many Arab groups contend that NGOs are legitimate targets because the delivery of humanitarian assistance has conspicuously and deliberately neglected the Arab community.

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LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OR SUPPORT FOR DPA IN WEST DARFUR  
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¶4. (C) UNMIS Civil Affairs and Human Rights Officers explained that there is little public support for the DPA in West Darfur, though there also exists a clear lack of knowledge regarding the accord. As in other parts of Darfur, popular discontent with the DPA stems principally from second-hand information provided by non-signatory groups, rather than substantive objections to the document. UNMIS Head of Office Annamaria Laurini noted that they had already organized workshops to explain the DPA to UN agencies and AMIS, and were seeking to have similar events with local NGO staff before possibly branching out to a wider audience. She added that many community leaders, in private, conveyed a strong interest in learning more about the DPA, but feared public backlash. ARC Officer described efforts underway to publicize the DPA and inform the population, in a neutral manner, about details of the agreement. ARC Officer further provided DPA outreach documents (produced by the UK strategic communications team) for background, and initiated coordination with the UK team to lay the foundation for the

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DPA public information campaign among select groups in West Darfur.

¶5. (C) Understanding and dissemination of the DPA are complicated by the firm grip of National Security in West Darfur and the reluctance of many humanitarian organizations to engage on &political<sup>8</sup> issues. Several UN officers remarked on the particularly forceful control exerted by National Security in West Darfur. They highlighted the paucity of civil society organizations that might act as vehicles to promote or explain the DPA, and underscored the concern of many NGOs that introducing the DPA in IDP camps or other politically sensitive areas might further polarize the local population. (Note: UNMIS Human Rights officers recounted that in early September, a local Masalit imam who spoke out in favor of UN peacekeepers was detained for several days by Sudanese Armed Forces military intelligence, provoking consternation among many citizens in El Geneina. End Note.)

¶6. (C) Notwithstanding skeptical popular sentiment toward the DPA, Laurini held that JEM elements in Jebel Moon are willing to participate in the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) and are actively pushing for peace with the Government. She suggested that creating a buffer zone, to be monitored by AMIS, around Jebel Moon would be a useful first step in diffusing tensions, though she also acknowledged that the AMIS decision to eject non-signatory representatives from the sector sub-Ceasefire Commissions (sub-CFC) had hardened the negotiating environment. (Note: The JEM element in Jebel Moon has little military capacity and has been weakened by defections. In early August, local media reported that Deputy JEM military commander Gardi Abdallah Abuna and thirteen other field commanders declared their support for the DPA and sought general amnesty from the Government, which was supposedly granted by the Wali of West Darfur Jaffar Abdel Hakim Ishag. End Note.)

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COMMENT

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¶7. (C) In separate conversations with ARC Officer, UN and local officials described the Government dismantlement of the Arab hierarchy in West Darfur, which contributed to deteriorating regional security. Seven Arab emirs that controlled large swathes of West Darfur and previously answered directly to Hilal, were replaced by &jihad emirs<sup>8</sup> installed by the Government. With lines of authority broken, the pre-existing Arab hierarchy began to disintegrate into a patchwork of &warlords and armed Arab bandits.<sup>8</sup> African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) and UN security reports have repeatedly documented the sustained presence of Arab militia and their attacks on the local populace and NGOs in West Darfur. For example, UNDSS reported on September 20 that Popular Defense Forces (PDF) ) generally considered as a Janjaweed surrogate and targeted for reform under the DPA ) organized a pro-Government rally near Zalingei University to demonstrate their military capacity and whip up anti-UN sentiment.

¶8. (C) The political and security landscape in West Darfur differs in significant ways from the two other Darfur states, therefore requiring tailored policy and programmatic approaches. The international community might consider additional means of enhancing DPA awareness in West Darfur by pushing the UK media team to invigorate activities in the region and through modest funding of civil society groups (Darfur Forum has representatives in El Geneina) to promote local reconciliation and education about the peace agreement. Additionally, there is an SLM/Minawi office in El Geneina (details reported septel) that could play a role in advocating the DPA, though the office is in dire need of logistical support (computers, supplies, etc.), which the international community could consider supplying as a means of demonstrating tangible and rapid support to build SLM/Minawi capacity. End summary.

HUME